Proposal to Discontinue Samjhauta Express

†3583. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK:
PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have registered a protest with Pakistan on the issue of using ""Samjhauta Express", running between India and Pakistan, for smuggling arms, drugs and fake currency notes into India;

(b) if so, the reaction of Pakistan thereto and in case of negative response whether Government propose to discontinue the train; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) to (c) The Government of India have repeatedly expressed their concerns, including through official statements, relating to the use of Samhauta express by Pakistani agencies and unscrupulous elements in that country to push contraband, including fire arms, narcotics and counterfeit currency into India. Government are exercising due vigilance to eliminate the incidence of smuggling of contraband. There is no proposal to discontinue the Samjhauta Express which constitutes an important transport link for the peoples of the two countries.

USA's Warning to India Nuclear Programme

†3584. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether United States of America has warned India that if it wants to improve her relations with U.S.A. it will have to stop her nuclear weapons and missile programmes and the export of technologies;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the response of Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) No Sir.

(b) The United States has stated that India herself has the sovereign right to make decisions about what is necessary for the defense of India and its interests.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) Governemnt reiterates that the determination of India's security requirements, including the maintenance of a minimum credible numclear deterrent, is a sovereign responsibility and cannot be determined by anohter country. Government is prepared to work with the United States to move towards achieving genuine non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery and to this end remains committed to build upon the productive bilateral dialogue already underway.

Government's reaction on News captioned "Kashmir, most dangerous place in the World"

3585. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in the Hindustan Times on the 11th March, 2000 captioned Kashmir, most dangerous place in the world; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government is aware of the comments attributed to President Clinton on the situation in South Asia, including his description of the region as the most dangerous place in the world. India has demonstrated its resolve and capacity to safeguard its interests in a restrained and responsible manner. There is now a better appreciation by the United States of India's restraint in dealing with persistent provocation from Pakistan. Government has also conveyed to the international community, including the United States, that it must direct its concerns on tensions in South Asia to persuading Pakistan to abjure violence, terrorism and hostile propaganda against India and respect the bilateral agreements it has solemnly entered into. Government is committed to resolving all problems with our neighbours through peaceful bilateral dialogue.

Conflicts between India and Pakistan

3586. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Pakistan's Foreign Minister has